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AUTHOR Ortiz, Flora Ida
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ABSTRACT

This ethnographic study reports on the socialization processes of a white male as he assumes a central office position. Individuals are willing to be socialized as part of learning a new role as part of their upward mobility, and in order to please those around them. The organization demands certain types because the position addresses many audiences; the organization feels it must "be in control" and these positions protect the superintendent. (Author)

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SOCIALIZATION PROCESSES OF CENTRAL OFFICE PERSONNEL

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Flora Ida Ortiz
University of California, Riverside

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Socialization Process of Central Office Personnel

In the study of school organization, an obvious omission has been the systematic study of central offices. McGivney & Haught (1972) present a structural view of two major groups and several subgroups which comprise the central office. They suggest that these groups may have certain consequences for the individual members as well as the organization. However, in their study of the central office their analysis is limited to the organizational units. The socialization processes which individuals undergo as members of those units are not part of their study. This study examines socialization processes which impact upon central office personnel, focusing on one white male participant. The intent is to identify the socialization agents, activities, and contexts which serve to shape the desired behaviors and attitudes of educational administrators as they move toward the top and center of the school organization.

There are several assumptions to this study. First, school districts must be large enough to contain a structured central office. Second, career potential is maximized in school districts which contain central offices. Third, central office position holders are midcareerists (Ortiz, 1978), i.e., they've had considerable teaching and administrative experience in the school organization. Fourth, the large urban school districts such as the Los Angeles, Chicago or New York School Districts' central offices are more complex than that presented in this study.

Methodology

Ethnographic research methods were employed to collect the data for the present report. A year was spent observing a central office in a middle sized urban school district located in Southern California. The district consisted of a central office of 20, 25 elementary schools, five junior high schools, and five high schools. The study began with open observational schedules in which the researcher spent time at the central office, met and interviewed central office personnel and attended meetings and events presided by central office staff.

The study began as a general socialization study. The major portion of the data were collected with a general theoretical framework regarding structural characteristics and socialization processes. This report is a partial analysis of that data. The case presented here exemplifies what appeared as a distinct intention on the part of the organization to socialize and the obvious willingness of the candidate to comply. A caution regarding this report is that not all central office position holders are socialized in this manner. This report is based on selective data from the total research effort.

The subject had just attained the central office position when this study was conducted. That means that the individual under study was observed during his first year as a central office position holder. It was determined that his position was two levels below that of the superintendent.

Data were also collected through intensive interviewing. Central office personnel, school site administrators, teachers, parents, school board members and community leaders were interviewed. Written documents were also collected and analyzed.

Review of the Literature

Socialization within an organizational setting requires processes willingly engaged in by individuals and processes by which organizations go about keeping their members. The literature dealing with careers records these processes. The writings are consistent in their descriptions of powerful forces which act upon individuals. Those works dealing with careers (Becker, et al., 1956; Becker, 1951-52; Etzioni, 1969; Carlson, 1972; Wolcott, 1973) show how the individual must display commitment, loyalty and willingness to do and be what is necessary in actualizing a career. Other researchers (Schein, 1971; Dalton, 1952) emphasize the organization's power to act upon individuals in order to "shape them up" for given organizational roles. These studies place importance upon the inter-relationships between the individual's characteristics and the organizational factors.

Studies dealing with school careers have focused upon the teacher, the superintendent and the principal. The elements identified as affecting the socialization processes of these individuals in these careers have considered both personal and organizational characteristics. For example, Becker (1951-52) in his study of teachers' mobility found that teachers decide to change their expectations and attitudes about learning if they stay in undesirable schools, or "shop" so that they can eventually be moved to better schools. In this study the "movement" is primarily attributed to the individual. However, the organization may act to block movement to better schools as in the case of certain minority persons.

Lortie (1975) in his study reports that the nature of teaching acts to encourage women to teach, to isolate individuals, and to promote an arid culture for interaction and the development of a technology. These charac-

teristics result in flat careers, with student concerns as primary and a protective and possessive attitude towards teaching, their students and their classroom.

In the investigation of the superintendency (Gross, et al., 1958; Carlson, 1972) the researchers record the conflict between personal preferences and organizational expectations. The superintendents are successful to the degree that their personal characteristics and preferences match the organization's needs and expectations.

The principal has been extensively studied. Those studies dealing with the position as a career record the socialization processes which individuals undergo. Griffiths, et al. (1965) record how teachers engage in GASing activities in order to depart from teaching. Blood (1966) reports on the anticipatory socialization activities in which individuals engage in order to assume administrative positions. Mascaro (1973) found that principals gradually change their perspective regarding their work. Bridges (1965) wrote that those elementary principals in the position for longer periods were more likely to assume bureaucratic roles. Wolcott (1973) found that principals were primarily "monitors for continuity." Each of these studies emphasize the organizational impact upon individual behavior.

School careers in the central office have not been reported. McGivney and Haught (1972) in their study of the central office staff identified sub-groups consisting of differing career types. Ortiz (1978) advocates a serious look at central office careers.

Assuming that careers are established through a long process of socialization, then, it is important that the processes be understood. Schein (1971) asserts that organizational careers may be a)"seen as a set of

attributes and experiences of the individual who joins, moves through, and finally leaves an organization and b) "as defined by the organization - a set of expectations held by individuals inside the organization which guide their decisions about whom to move, when, how and at what "speed" (401-402).

The process which Schein (1971) describes consists of movement along "three conceptually distinguishable dimensions: vertically, i.e., corresponding roughly to the notion of increasing or decreasing one's rank or level in the organization; 2) radially, i.e., corresponding roughly to the notion of increasing or decreasing one's centrality in the organization, one's degree of being more or less on the inside; and 3) circumferentially, i.e., corresponding roughly to the notion of changing one's function or one's division of the organization (403).

Corresponding to the three types of movement one can identify three types of boundaries which characterize the internal structure of the organization: 1) hierarchical boundaries - which separate the hierarchical levels from one another; 2) inclusion boundaries - which separate individuals or groups who differ in the degree of their centrality; and 3) functional or departmental boundaries - which separate departments, divisions, or different functional groupings from one another (404-405).

In the investigation of central office careers in public school organizations, it appears useful to apply Schein's (1971) notions about movement within an organization. The intent is to show that central office position acquisition is an indication of moving "toward the center" of the school organization.

Individual Attributes

Walter Dunn, director of instruction, of the Sunnyvale Public School

District joined the central office on July 1 of the year in which the present study was conducted. He was in his early 30's and had just previously held a vice-principalship position at one of the high schools. Prior to that he had been assistant principal of an elementary school.[1] His school career had commenced as with most school administrators as a teacher in the secondary schools.

His experience indicates that he was familiar with classroom, elementary schools and secondary schools. Additionally, while serving as vice principal of the high school, he had also served in the school district's professional negotiations committee. This last assignment had afforded him district-wide experience.

Walter is also presently a doctoral candidate at the local university. Carlson (1972) found that administrators desiring more than the elementary principalship tended to pursue extensive education. At the university, Walter holds an impressive record. As an undergraduate his grade point average was 3.07. His Graduate Record Examination score is likewise an impressive 1240. His grade point average in graduate study has always been close to 4.0. He has pursued his graduate studies in organization theory and professional negotiations. Personally, he is gregarious, pleasant, and with a fine sense of humor. As an administrator he was describes as "a doer, sometimes a little impatient, but competent" (1). In summary, Walter is a personable, young man with many abilities.

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[1] The titles of the positions are not exact in order to protect the identity of the individual.

When he obtained his position, he was gratified and stated,

> "Well, I'll be doing those things I can do best, those things I like to do best, and I'll be able to work on a district-wide level. Before this, I've always felt constrained working for a single school. I think I can be successful" (2).

One of the principals who has known him since he was a teacher said,

> He may not have had enough experience to understand all of us. Nevertheless, he'll probably be successful, he's bright enough" (3).

Walter is not much different from most central office administrators. In order to attain a central office position, it is usually necessary to teach, hold some building site administrative position for several years (move vertically and functionally) and finally move to the central office. This process is more common among those whose position carries with it direct responsibilities with teachers and principals. Movement to the central office denotes radial placement. The two indicants are that it moves individuals closer to the superintendent and his associates, and district policy decisions emanate from there. When this study was conducted, Walter had moved vertically, radially, and circumferentially. He had served as teacher and administrator in both elementary and secondary schools and was acquainted with most of the school district's principals and teachers. These characteristics promised success.

Organizational Expectations

Walter Dunn's position's description was brief: "Mr. Dunn will have overall responsibility for all aspects of the K-8 program. This includes coordination of the Sunnyvale Instructional System (SIS).

Mr. Dunn will continue to assist Mr. West in the professional negotiations committee and work in the policy development arena as need might dictate."

Mr. Dunn's position was placed in the hierarchy below the Associate Superintendent of Instruction with three other directors. His responsibilities did not differ much from the others in number, but did differ in degree of extensive coverage throughout the district. One of the other directors was responsible for the high schools' curriculum as well as the mentally gifted and special education programs in the elementary schools. The second administrator was in charge of bilingual education programs, remedial physical education, driver training and community relations. The third director was responsible for projects, staff development and curriculum materials. Walter was responsible for the total K-8 program, the SIS, fine arts program, but in contrast to the other directors he was also assigned to the professional negotiations committee as assistant to the Superintendent of Personnel. His assignment required interaction with all elementary school participants, the community, curriculum specialists, and the Superintendent of Personnel, and other individuals from all school district levels.

Schein (1971) states that the "dynamics of a career can be thought of as a sequence of boundary passages. The person can move up, around, and in: and every career is some sequence of moves along these three paths" (148). The organization has aided Walter Dunn's progression through the school organization. Movement has continued upward, that is, Walter has crossed the hierarchical boundaries with apparently relative ease. His movement to the center is indicated by his assignment to a central office position. His membership in the school district's professional negotiations committee indicates movement toward the central core of school district business. The movement "around" is the movement between elementary assistant principal and high school vice principal. This movement has provided broad and functional opportunities.

Schein (1971) states that permeating the hierarchical and functional boundaries is easier. One can identify the rules associated with hierarchical movement and entry into functional areas with greater ease. It is the inclusion boundaries which are the most difficult to detect. He claims it's because their very existence is usually implicit. The inner circle may be clear to everyone in an organization, but may be denied to an outsider. The filtering or entry mechanisms may not be obvious because even the members of the inner circle are unclear about the actual mechanisms by which people move toward the center. Additionally, the "concept of centrality is unclear because it does not discriminate between a) an individual person's feeling of being central or peripheral and b) some objective criterion of his actual position in the organization's social structure" (408).

The indicants that Walter is moving "toward the center" are both personal and organizational The individual's perceptions about the forces acting upon him and the degree of influence he exerts are the personal factors assumed to be important. The organization's factors include the organizational position he holds, the responsibilities and opportunities the position affords, the degree to which company secrets are entrusted to him, the ratings of others of his position and his actual power.

Crossing the Inclusion Boundaries

Schein (1971) outlines some of the personal attributes that aid in the movement "towards the center" of the organization. The intent is to seek order and consistency within the person. One is found in emotional sensitivity. Another is found in the role demands which the person faces. The pivotal, relevant and peripheral attributes of a role will define in some

degree the filters which operate at the boundary guarding access to that role.

In the process of socialization, the basic personality structure and pattern of psychological defenses are not likely to change; but what will change is the social self "in the sense of developing new attitudes and values, new competencies, new images of himself, and new ways of entering and conducting himself in social situations. As he faces new roles which bring new demands, it is from this repertoire of attributes and skills that he constructs or reconstructs himself to meet these demands" (412).

In the process of self reconstruction, beliefs, attitudes, and values function in several ways. Smith et al. (1956) distinguished three such functions: 1) reality testing - where beliefs and attitudes are used by the person to discover and test the basic reality around him; 2) social adjustment where beliefs and attitudes are used by the person to enable him to relate comfortably to others, express his membership in groups, and his social selves; 3) externalization where beliefs and attitudes are used to express personal conflicts conscious and unconscious motives and feelings.

As was stated previously, Walter is a personable individual described by teachers as: "considerate, sensitive to our needs and likely to respond quickly to our problems. He also had a sense of humor which helped in tense situations" (4). "Despite his youth, he usually displayed maturity and composure in most situations" (5). "He made you feel he hadn't forgotten teachers' problems are like" (6).

Principals describes him as,

Young and sometimes brash, but on the whole just and kind" (7).

"Very lucky in moving so fast. Part of it is due to his ability to relate to others. He makes you feel at ease. I think teachers liked that of him when he was a principal" (8).

His colleagues at the central office described him as, "A pleasant fellow to be with. He has an understanding of the school district and its problems. He is also able to articulate and to help us all decide what the critical elements of a problem are. I believe his best characteristic, though, is that he is a bright individual with ambition and drive" (9).

All of the interviewees mentioned his high blood pressure. One central office staff member said, "Walter will have to learn to slow down. Do you realize that he comes in every morning to check his blood pressure? He continues to monitor it during the day, so we usually see him at least once again every day" (10).

Walter was not inclined to describe himself in great detail. He stated once, " I know I tend to operate at a high tension level. I have to learn to relax." Another time he said, " I like my work, I like what I'm doing. I want to continue in this kind of work. If I'm successful, it's because I stay at my work" (12). Indicants of his beliefs and values regarding his work were more obvious in the way he conducted his school business. He was observed to be punctual. He tended to spend a lot of time composing memos, information sheets and summary reports. He appeared almost compulsive in the way he tried to keep principals and others informed. He sent informative clippings, notices of professional literature, meetings and classes. He stated once, "Principals have to know what's going on outside their school. One way to inform them is to send them some relevant information that crosses my desk" (13). Another characteristic was that he tried to respond immediately to a request, a need, or a problem. Things would be dropped, he would get on the telephone, or go to the school site. Sometimes, this was viewed as unnecessary urgency. The point to be made here is that he tended to be consumed by his work which

gave an appearance of urgency.

An an individual moves through a career, Schein (1971) poses three points of view which are assumed. First, the individual builds certain perspectives having to do with advancement, personal success, nature of the work (Becker, et al., 1961). Second, those individuals who are in the organization as managers take the "organizational" point of view, build perspectives in terms of the development of human resources, allocation of the right people to the right slots, and optimum rates of movement through departments and levels. Third, the outside observer is struck by certain basic similarities between organizational careers and other transitional processes which occur in society" (415).

Walter did not hesitate to claim he hoped to be a superintendent some day. But he was reticent about expressing urgency or impatience. He stated once, "Sure, I'd like to be superintendent some day. Right now, I'm at the central office. I have work to do here. I have much to learn. Besides, I still have to complete the doctoral program. I have to deal with now" (14).

When he was asked about whether he believed he was holding an important, influential position, he responded, "This is my first year at the central office. In this setting, I'm a newcomer. On the other hand, in contrast to last year, I am much more influential now and the central office does give you additional leverage. I know I have a better position now, but I also know it is not the superintendency. The way I view this position is that I am learning more about the school district. I am getting new experiences and the superintendents are helping me as I do these things" (15).

Walter seemed to have a realistic view of the position he was holding, the direction in which he was moving, and the appreciation of the superinten-

dents' support. The data are sparse in personal descriptions. Walter resisted talking about himself. Other individuals viewed his movement as an improvement over school site administration. A principal stated, "If you want to be superintendent of a school district nowadays, it's best to have central office experience. Walter is fortunate to have that opportunity" (16). Another said, "Anytime you move closer to the superintendent, you can be sure you're on you way up" (17).

The central office staff perceived his position as more influential than the principalship he had held previously. One associate superintendent said, "The school district needs to utilize its talents in the best way possible. Walter is a very competent individual, when it was decided to bring him over, it was because it was felt he could contribute more here" (18).

The data don't indicate that Walter exerted power as such. What is indicated is that his position was an improvement over the last, and that moving closer to the superintendent increased a positive perception of him.

As was stated earlier, this study looks at the socializaing agents, activities and contexts which act upon an individual as he moves "toward the center" of the school organization. The central office houses the most powerful organizational members of the school district. The school superintendent, his associates, and the leadership of the various functional offices of the school district are located within the central office. Moreover, the school board members have access to the school district through the central office. Normally, work areas and meeting rooms are also located within the central office. Therefore, a newcomer to the central office is first and foremost socialized by the leaders of the school district.

Other agents who act upon the individual are the principals of the

district's schools. In this particular study, Walter was assigned to the K-8 schools, therefore, those principals became the socializing agents. Due to the number of elementary principals a small proportion of them could appear more powerful than they actually were. For Walter, the elementary principals played an important part in socializing him.

The third group which was influential in socializing the individual was the school board. As part of his work, Walter had to prepare reports dealing with K-8 curriculum, the Sunnyside Instructional System, and all other aspects of the K-8 program. These reports eventually had to be approved by the school board. The process for approval of these reports provided a setting for school board members to socialize Walter. Another aspect in socializing Walter was if individual school board members received complaints about him from either parents. The data indicate Walter was informed a few times about these complaints. For example, principals wanted to remain autonomous in class assignment of students. Parents wanted a statement from someone regarding student assignment to teachers.

The fourth group which acted as a socializing agent was the group under the associate superintendent of personnel that was engaged in professional negotiations. This was a group composed of individuals from across the school district which represented principals, administrative staff and the superintendents. These individuals were relatively influential members of the school district.

Each of the four groups described performed different functions in socializing Walter. They could be constraining or liberating. An incident will be used to illustrate how these groups affected Walter. The superintendent requested a policy regarding reporting pupil progress to parents.

Throughout the year Walter Dunn met with several groups of people to help him develop the policy. The groups included parents, teachers and principals. When a policy was agreed upon Walter Dunn proceeded to prepare the official document for approval by the board.

In the preparation of the written report, some elementary principals felt that they should have been included. Their complaint was that they should have been allowed to have read the report before it was actually submitted to the board for approval. The data do not show that principals complained directly to school board members, but when the report came up for approval at the board meeting, a member who had previously submitted a draft and others raised some issues. The result was that the acceptance of the policy was delayed.

At the school board meeting the complaints centered around the unnecessary length and wordiness of the report. The minutes of that meeting read:

> Board members discussed the proposed policy and regulations at length, directing that Board Standing Rules be coordinated with policies and regulations and wording be reduced. [The superintendent] agreed that there must be coordination between Board Standing Rules and Parent Complaint Policy and Regulations. He also stated that guidelines and policies should guarantee that parents will have a personal contact with school authorities in order to voice complaints. Mrs. _____ [a school board member], outlined a suggested order for complaint procedures which could be condensed from a proposed draft she had submitted previously and which emphasized adequate communication and information to all persons involved. Dr. ____ [another school board member] suggested that complaints regarding grades might also be covered in Policy on Reporting Pupil Progress. Board members also directed that policy and regulations be rewritten to provide for mutual agreement between the parties involved regarding anyone who may attend formal school conferences. The president of the board announced that this topic will be returned to the board after being edited and rewritten as suggested by board members.
>
> Board members discussed the proposed policy and regulations in detail. Dr. _____and Dr. _____ asked for clarification and consolidation of provisions for proposed lists of comments which teachers could draw upon. Board members also asked that specific terminology be clarified

> for better understanding by parents. The superintendent stated that these regulations will be rewritten.
>
> Board members concurred with Dr._____'s position that reports to the home must be entirely consistent with the school's permanent records for students. Dr. _____and Dr._____asked that whatever system is adopted, provisions be made to enable parents to know what records are on file at the school.
>
> Mr. Walter Dunn responded to the questions from Board members regarding notification procedures, marking periods, and various bases for grading. [The president of the board] commented that the proposed policies and regulations will be returned to a board agenda with revisions. (School Board Minutes, April 10, _____).

As can be seen by the extensive coverage of this item in the board meetings minutes, the policy was viewed as an important document. Because it was prepared by one person, however, contributed to a great degree, the desire to see the document revised. Various perceptions about this incident are recorded. Some elementary school principals felt this was an attempt to alert Walter to maintain contact on a project throughout its duration. For example, one principal said, "It delights me to have his work torn apart especially when he feels he doesn't need to talk to anyone about it" (19). Another principal commented, "He had a problem. Maybe, someone ought to help him by suggesting he should have someone with a little ability read what he writes" (20).

The superintendent, on the other hand, was more sympathetic and during the board's deliberation, commented, "I think we can clean it up [the written policy] and get it together" (21).

Ordinarily, this sort of issue would have been resolved informally so that approval by the board would have been swift and quiet. Instead, the issue was perceived as a means to bring about compliance from Mr. Dunn.

The Policies and Regulations for Reporting Pupil Progress to Parents

was approved with minor revisions a month later. At the subsequent principals' meeting a comment made by one of them was, "You'll be glad to know that [Pol'cies and Regulations....] finally went through. The Board threw out everything the district did and put in what [they] did" (22). Mr. Dunn had a different perception. He said, "Little changed except order and wording" (23).

The incident just described shows how the various agents converged to act upon an individual. The principals expected to be included in the policy process until it was accepted. School board members expected to have their suggestions incorporated into the final written report. These two groups acted to constrain Walter and to serve notice of their participation. Central office personnel, however, expected Walter to show some initiative and compose the document from the information he had gathered from the different groups. One central office staff member said, "Of course Walter can compose a policy statement. He has been hearing those concerns for several months from people across the district. It's not feasible to expect many persons to engage in the writing. Besides, editorial changes come about until the final draft. This is just a small incident. Walter has to learn to acknowledge the principals out there" (24).

Walter viewed the incident as a means to learn. He stated, "I must not forget that everyone is watching me. Some of the principals think I'm still a principal working with them. They have to realize I'm in the central office. But I too, have to remember that they can make it unpleasant for me if I don't acknowledge them. The school board members on the other hand, have to insure we're doing the best we can. This is just a learning experience for me" (25).

The superintendent said, "You learn from you mistakes. An incident can point out all of the forces that can be brought to bear when something isn't

right" (26).

In summary, there is a difference between the socializing agents and the individual being socialized. The principals and school board members overtly exerted influence. The central office provided unobtrusive support. Walter complied and accepted the incident as a learning experience.

Socialization is also determined by its context. Walter had just left the principalship position. In comparison to other school administrators he had been promoted steadily and rapidly. Other principals coveted his moves. It was perceived by some that the superintendent favored Walter. For example, one principal said, "If it wasn't for the superintendent, Walter would still be a high school teacher or at the most a vice principal" (27).

One of the central office secretaries said, "I think that Walter is highly regarded by the superintendent. The appointment to the professional negotiations committee was clearly preferential" (28).

The position which Walter held encompassed the K-8 level. In general, it was a position which functioned over the instructional elements of K-8. The position was below that of the Associate Superintendent for Instruction. It was an important position and probably for most, a self sufficient position. However, in Walter's case he retained his membership within the professional negotiations committee and was given the responsibility to formulate policy under the Associate Superintendent for Personnel. It is this extra responsibility that set him apart from the other directors.

This additional assignment was perceived differently by the various groups. Elementary principals saw it as an intrusion into their demands. One principal stated, "Because he is also responsible to the Associate Superintendent of Personnel, many times we cannot expect as much from him regarding instruc-

tional matters" (29). Another principal voiced the opinion that being part of the personnel team maybe gave him the impression he could make personnel decisions regarding principals that he wouldn't otherwise. "Walter may come to believe that he can judge us as principals rather than serve to consult and aid us in providing the necessary services to the students" (30).

This latter fear led some principals to unite and ask Walter to limit his distribution of memos. One principal stated, "In the past two weeks, I've received a dozen memos and attachments. I don't need all of that information. Enough runs through my desk without those reminders. Maybe, Walter doesn't have enough to do!" (31).

Lest it be thought that all principals voiced strong opinions about Walter, the reader is reminded that partly due to the number of principals, a group of three or four principals could appear as a stronger group than it really was. Many principals had no opinion about Walter and many were not disturbed by his actions. Nevertheless, the few principals who reacted to him provided a force which altered his behavior. For example, he learned to curb the number of memos he wrote and attachments he sent. He learned to let telephone calls rest and he learned to spend more time at the central office. He described this process, "When I first started here, I felt I had to respond to everything as rapidly as possible. I would try to clear my desk every day. I responded to telephone calls immediately and many times I'd just drive to the schools to see exactly what was what. Now, I respond immediately only when the call specifies urgency. I try to wait until I have a number of items to write about before mailing anything to the schools. I don't go to the schools as often" (32).

One of the principals who had received several calls and visits from

Walter during the first of the year said, "Walter has learned to slow down and to trust that we do know what's going on in our schools. I do believe we work together a lot better now" (33).

A central office staff member said, "It takes a while to understand how principals wish to be left alone in their schools, but at the same time know they can depend on a support system. It is also problematic to know how much you should involve everyone. School people complain about the time we spend here [at the central office] but at the same time aren't overjoyed if we visit them too often" (34).

In summary, Walter found himself in a context in which he participated with principals selectively, preserving their school autonomy and providing solicited support. The central office, on the other hand, provided an environment of support and encouragement. He described his relationship this way, "I enjoy working for this group. By and large, I am left alone to decide how the instruction should be conducted in the schools. My superior is very supportive. He wants me to learn by doing and by trying things. He suggests certain things, but I don't feel constrained. In fact, when the principals call on me, I feel that the central office staff serves as a support while I readjust myself to the principals' expectations" (35).

As part of the professional negotiating committee, Walter was also placed in a context which afforded district-wide exposure. He found this part of his work challenging. He said, "I've been part of this committee several years. I enjoy seeing how the negotiation process unfolds. I expecially appreciate the experience of working with the Associate Superintendent. He has a lot of experience. He knows everyone in this district. He is a careful negotiator,

but above all he has a flair for the whole process. I fell I'm learning a lot" (31).

Other school personnel viewed this assignment as an indication that Walter wasn't long for the director's position. One person said, "If Walter meant to stay in this central office forever, he wouldn't be so diligent about that committee" (37). A principal said, "The reason I say Walter is at the central office to be groomed for the superintendency is because he is a member of the professional negotiating committee. Every other director is busy enough without a comparable assignment (38).

One of the associate superintendents said, "Certain areas require a lot of talent. Walter is talented in professional negotiations. He is an asset to the committee. The district is benefitting from Walter's contribution" (39).

The primary socialization function which the professional negotiating committee provided was district-wide exposure. The member was provided with experiences which encompassed the entire school district. The considerations had to be district-wide. This was in contrast to the function performed with principals in which Walter had to consider school site conditions.

Walter spoke about his work in the professional negotiations committee, "In negotiating for the school district, you have to think in a broader way. Your focus becomes what is good for the district rather than what should I do for my school or a school. Being able to have this broader perspective is important, I think, but I also see that you can lose it if you aren't required to think on those terms. I am lucky. I work for the principals and for the school district. This year it has been difficult to keep both views separate, but I've learned a lot" (40).

Conclusions

Socialization processes in the development of an educational administration career are severe at certain junctures. Schein (1971) states that it is in the movement towards the center that is the most trying. The case study which has been presented illustrates how socialization processes are actualized. First, socialization agents act upon the individual, sometimes in contradictory fashion. Second, the activities in which the individual engages determine to a great degree whether the individual actually moves centrally. Third, the contexts in which the individual is placed provide a means for the individual to undergo specific experiences and learn new ways to function within the organization.

Walter was moving successfully to the center of the organization. First, he was personally committed to advance within educational administration. Second, he viewed his mistakes, experiences and shortcomings as a process of "learning." Third, he maintained a realistic view of the position with its characteristics of limitations and possibilities. Fourth, he readjusted himself according to the demands of the various groups.

The organization aided him in his movement toward the center in several ways. First, it placed him in a position where he had access to those who decide "whom to move, how and at what speed" (Schein, 1971: 401-402). Second, the position was enlarged to include experiences with district-wide issues as well as K-8 instruction. Third, the central office staff provided support and encouraged initiative. Fourth, the organizational context provided both restraining and liberating forces which served to train the individual to respond to competing demands.

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